

The Fragrant Rose Is Alive And Well!!

By Neil Neumann, Master Gardener and member of the Fort Vancouver Rose Society.

What invariably happens when you hand someone a rose? They smell it! And if you ask the average person to describe his or her ideal rose, odds are the answer would be “red and fragrant.” However, many roses have little or no fragrance. This includes those beautiful bouquets given for holidays, birthdays and other special occasions.

So what has happened to the fragrant rose?

Let’s dispel the enduring rose myth that all old roses are fragrant while very few modern roses have discernible aroma. While it is true that many old garden roses are fragrant, it is also true that many modern roses are very fragrant as well. To determine roughly how many fragrant varieties are readily available locally, I surveyed four local nurseries and reviewed current catalogs of three well-known growers. The only requirement for inclusion on the following list is that the rose is rated as having strong fragrance.

The following list of fragrant roses includes varieties from each of these rose classes:

hybrid teas & grandifloras	39	floribundas	14
climbers	12	miniatures	19
shrub roses	5		

Most David Austin and English roses are fragrant, so they are not listed. Likewise, as most Old Garden Roses (pre-1867) are fragrant, they are not listed.

This list is representative of fragrant roses currently available. There are many more. The numbers in parentheses indicate their garden ratings as established by the American Rose Society (on a scale from 1 to 10; above 7 is a good rating, and above 8 is a very good rating; nr = not rated. A rose is on the market at least 4 years before a rating can be established):

Hybrid teas & grandifloras:

red & red blend

Chrysler Imperial (7.0)
Double Delight (8.4)
Dublin (8.2)
Firefighter (7.7)
Mister Lincoln (8.3)

white

Full Sail (7.3)
John F. Kennedy (6.3)
Maria Shriver (7.5)
Sheer Bliss (7.8)

orange & orange blend

Folklore (8.2)
Fragrant Cloud (8.1)
Just Joey (7.9)
Sutter’s Gold (6.9)

pink & pink blend

Bride’s Dream (8.1)
Color Magic (7.9)
Electron (7.8)
Elegant Lady (7.5)
Frederic Mistral (7.9)
New Zealand (7.9)
Parole (7.7)
Secret (7.9)

mauve

Barbra Streisand (7.1)
Fragrant Plum (7.7)
Melodie Parfumee (7.7)
Neptune (7.5)
Royal Amethyst (7.4)
Stephen’s Big Purple (7.5)

yellow & yellow blend

French Perfume (7.4)
Radiant Perfume (7.4)
St. Patrick (8.0)
Sundance (7.5)
Tahitian Sunset (7.7)
Toulouse-Lautrec (7.4)

Tiffany (7.9)
Touch of Class (8.9)

apricot blend
Sunset Celebration (7.8)

russet
Honey Dijon (7.5)

Floribundas:

red & red blend
Europeana (8.6)
Scentimental (7.7)

white
Iceberg (8.7)
Margaret Merrill (8.2)

orange blend
Tuscan Sun (7.8)

pink & pink blend
none rated

mauve
Angel Face (7.7)
Blueberry Hill (7.8)
Intrigue (7.1)

yellow & yellow blend
Julia Child (8.2)
Sheila's Perfume (8.2)

apricot
Amber Queen (7.1)
Apricot Nectar (8.0)
Honey Perfume (7.7)

russet
Hot Cocoa (7.9)

Climbers:

red & red blend
Don Juan (8.2)
Fourth of July (8.1)

white
Cl. Iceberg (8.5)
White New Dawn (7.9)

orange/pink
America (8.3)

pink & pink blend
Aloha (8.0)
Cl. Mlle Cecile Brunner (8.4)
New Dawn (8.6)
Pearly Gates (7.7)

apricot
Cl. Autumn Sunset (nr)
Royal Sunset (8.9)
Westerland (8.2)

Miniatures:

red & red blend
Harm Saville (nr)
Merlot (7.5)
Norwich Sweetheart (7.5)

white
Irresistible(9.0)
Starina (8.3)

orange
Julie Ann (7.3)

pink & pink blend
Amy Grant (7.5)
Doris Morgan (7.8)
Overnight Scentsation (7.5)
Seattle Scentsation (7.4)

mauve
Sachet (7.4)
Scentsational (7.6)
Vista (7.6)

yellow
Autumn Splendor (8.1)
Hot Tamale (8.3)
Luis Desamero (7.9)
Rainbow's End (8.7)

apricot
Busy Bee (7.5)
Peach Delight (7.7)

Shrub roses:

pink

Blushing Knockout (8.1)

mauve

Midnight Blue (7.3)

Outta the Blue (7.9)

white

Darlow's Enigma (8.3)

Lyda Rose (8.9)

As fragrance is subjective, what may appeal to one person may not appeal to another. The same rose will present a change in fragrance due to changes in temperature, light and wind, as well as dry or damp conditions. Time of day, too much sun, and the age of the bloom also affect presence or change in fragrance. In general, newly opened blooms are the most fragrant. Double blooms (those with more than one set of petals) are more fragrant than simple blooms. On warm days, the complex biochemical process that creates fragrance is accelerated. When humidity is high with no wind, fragrance remains longer.

With this in mind, take time to smell the roses early in the morning and later in the day.

Sources of information:

Edmunds Roses www.edmundsroses.com

Heirloom roses www.heirloomroses.com

Nor'East Miniature Roses <http://www.nor'east-miniroses.com/>

Bird's English Garden and Nursery
1296 S. Dolan Road, Ridgefield

Shorty's Garden Center
10006 SE Mill Plain Blvd., Vancouver

Tsugawa Nursery
410 Scott Avenue, Woodland

Yard 'N' Garden Land
1501 NE 102nd Street, Vancouver